

**HOOD IN SCOTLAND:
REMINISCENCES
OF THOMAS HOOD,
POET AND HUMORIST**

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Hood in Scotland: Reminiscences of Thomas Hood, Poet and Humorist by Alex Elliot

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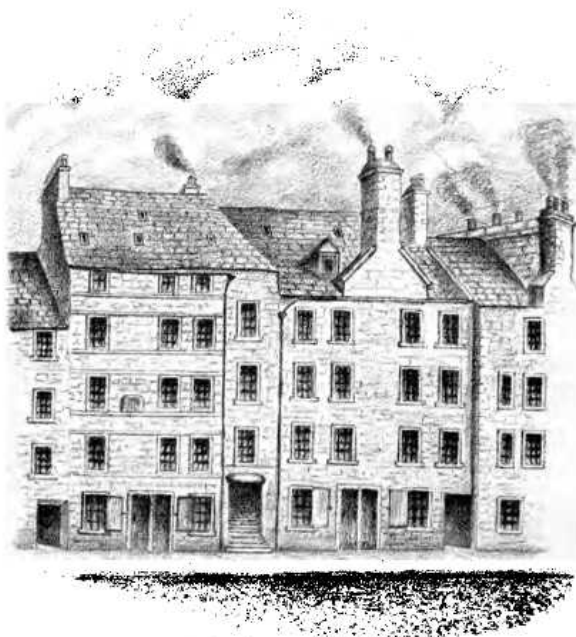
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ALEX ELLIOT

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TENEMENT AT FOOT OF OVERGATE
Where Hoop resided during his first visit to Dundee.

The "Buckle Stair" is shown in the centre of
the View.

HOOD IN SCOTLAND:

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REMINISCENCES
OF
THOMAS HOOD,
Poet and Humorist.

INCLUDING

SKETCH OF HIS ANTECEDENTS,
ORIGINAL LETTERS AND POEM HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED,
AND LETTERS, &c., BY HIS SON AND DAUGHTER.


COLLECTED AND ARRANGED BY ALEX. ELLIOT.

Introductory Notice by Charles C. Maxwell.


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PREFATORY NOTE.



IN respectfully laying the following pages before the public, I venture to express the hope that their imperfections will be regarded with a kindly eye. Throughout, I have been actuated by the thought that many of my fellow-townsmen might feel interested in the fact that the greatest humorist of modern times had resided for a considerable period in "Bonnie Dundee," and would be gratified to know that the shaping of a career so distinguished as HOOD'S was in a great measure due to the influence of the friendships and associations he there formed.



The biographers of the Poet pass lightly over his Scottish connection, and in the "Memorials" collated by his son and daughter the fact is summarized in a few lines. HOOD is stated to have lived for a time with his relatives in Dundee, but who they were, or in what particular part of the town they resided, is not mentioned. These facts were worthy, I thought, of consideration and research. To their elucidation I have therefore devoted considerable time and labour, and, if I have been able to throw some light upon an interesting period of the Poet's life, I will feel amply rewarded.

I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to those parties who have kindly supplied me with information, and who have done everything in their power to facilitate my inquiries. I am particularly indebted to Mr CHARLES C. MAXWELL for the beautiful and fitting tribute to the memory of the great poet and humorist prefixed to the volume; and to Mr A. H. MILLAR, F.S.A., for his researches on my behalf in Edinburgh and London.

I have also to accord my thanks to Miss ELIZABETH HOOD, Dundee, for supplying me with a number of holograph letters, written by the Poet to his friends in Tayport; to Mr DAVID ROLLO of Bloomfield, Lochee, and his brothers SYLVESTER, GEORGE, and NORMAN, representatives of the late Mr GEORGE HAIR ROLLO of Hairfield, Lochee, for allowing me to have access to the correspondence which took place between him and HOOD, as well as for permission to publish "The Bandit"; to Mr FINLAY MILN of Hoylake, Cheshire, for the letter relating to the "Dundee Guide"; and, in conclusion, I beg to acknowledge the great kindness I have received from Mr A. C. LAMB, Mr JAMES ALEXANDER, Dundee, Mr PEARSON, Registrar, Errol, and others.

A. E.

LOCHEE, *December* 1885.



INTRODUCTION.

THERE are some authors who enjoy while they yet live the full measure of their fame, which after generations may lessen or even extinguish; there are others who are never truly appreciated till they are gone, and whose reputation rises with the lapse of time. THOMAS HOOD, who "sang the Song of the Shirt," is one of these, for year by year his name grows in favour, and his works in popularity. Nor is this to be wondered at, since his qualities as a Poet and Humorist were so high, his motives so worthy, his sympathies so true and keen; while his command over the springs both of tears and laughter was complete and irresistible. The most remarkable feature in his writings, as a whole, is their unique combination of wit and tenderness, of gaiety and wisdom, of puns and pathos. And herein they are a faithful reflex of his life, which, although one long struggle with ill health and adverse fortune, was yet full of that "sweetness and light" which Philosophy and Religion alike commend. To give some idea of the physical weakness and pain which it was his lot to bear, I quote from a letter by his physician to his wife, five years before he died:—"Your

husband," he writes, "is suffering from organic disease of the heart, and hemorrhage from the lungs, or spitting of blood, occurring very frequently. There is also disorder of the liver and stomach. These diseases have been greatly aggravated of late years by the necessity, which I understand has existed, that he should at all times continue his literary labours. You have seen him break down under the struggle, and reduced to the brink of the grave by repeated attacks of bleeding from the lungs, attended by palpitation of the heart." Reflecting on the gravity of these words, need we wonder that THOMAS HOOD died at the comparatively early age of forty-seven? We may wonder rather that he lived even so long; still more, that he achieved so much sterling work of brain and hand; and, most of all, that he preserved amid his many troubles such strong sympathies,—such kindly cheerfulness. A hero, we may well call him;—a hero, with pale cheek and feeble frame, yet of vigorous mind, high thoughts, and a brave heart withal.

Concerning such a man, surely anything fresh and authentic will not be unwelcome, and I therefore heartily commend this volume to the favourable attention of the reader. It contains a minute account of HOOD's residence in Scotland at an early and interesting period of his life; together with a number of characteristic Letters; and an original Poem from his pen hitherto known to but a few—all published here for the first time. For the privilege thus offered of perusing these we are indebted to the